

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

April 2, 2001

The meeting was called to order at 5PM by Prof. Michael Payne.

Announcements by the President

President Rogers began by thanking everyone for their efforts on behalf of the university this past year, especially people occupying interim administrative positions. He then discussed the recent incident in which an automatic weapon was found in a student's room. He noted that new university policy bans all weapons on campus, and that penalties for infractions are being developed. The new policy will be publicized in all university publications.

Reporting on building projects, the President announced that the contract for the new Recreational and Athletic Center will be signed shortly. Bids on a slate roof for the O'Leary Center were being solicited. The contract for the Coleman Hall renovation has been signed and the various utilities projects on campus were coming along.

Turning to vice-presidential searches, the President reported that he is still considering the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs candidates, and hopes to report on an appointment by mid-April. Candidates for the Vice President of University Relations have just finished interviews. A short list of candidates for the Vice President for Finance and Administration is being developed; candidates for Vice President for Student Affairs are still being interviewed.

Responding to a question from Prof. Jean Shackelford, Deans Ferraro and Commerford clarified the judicial process for the student accused of possessing the weapon in the case referred to above. They noted the student will appear before the Community Judicial Board in the coming week, and although the gap between the reported incident and the hearing seems long, Spring Break delayed some of the initial steps.

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

In presenting the slate for nominees for committees, Prof. Payne thanked the Faculty Council for their work. He noted how hard it was to get people to run for the University Review Committee. He has asked the URC to consider procedural changes that would reduce time commitment on the committee.

Nominations were then solicited from the floor for committees. The Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure requires a separate nominating committee. It comprises Profs. Shackelford, Linden Lewis, and Jim Pommersheim, who will be soliciting nominees.

The Faculty Council introduced a motion to amend the Faculty Handbook: *Faculty Council recommends that the last sentence in Personnel, Section M, read: The Faculty Hearing Committee shall consist of five tenured faculty members elected every three years, one from each of the standard groups and one at-large.* Rationale: The FHC currently has 4 members,

and an even number of members is not a good idea for a judicial board, in case of a split vote. This motion will be voted upon at the September 2001 faculty meeting.

Prof. Payne then asked for a motion to suspend the rules to allow some business from the Committees on Planning and Budget, and Faculty and Academic Personnel to come before the faculty. Prof. John Miller so moved, it was seconded, and approved by the required 2/3 vote.

Prof. David Jensen introduced another amendment to the Faculty Handbook: *The Committee on Planning and Budget moves that its committee membership be expanded to include one additional salaried staff member (below the level of dean) and two hourly staff members so that all members of the campus community are represented on this committee. The new members of the committee should be elected through a ballot process that is consistent with other staff committee membership processes.* This motion will be voted upon at the September 2001 faculty meeting.

Rationale: The CPB was asked to work on new methods for salary determination, which is well underway. They are ready to send a plan forward informally to administrators and trustees. CPB will also be discussing the living wage issue. These issues affect the whole Bucknell community, hence the desire for the expanded membership. Prof. Jensen noted the motion will need approval of the BSG.

Old Business

Dean Ferraro summarized briefly the reaction of the Committee on Complementary Activities to the Greek Life Report (see February, 2001 minutes for a more extensive summary). The CCA opposed moving rush, supported minimum 2.5 GPA, endorsed a closer relationship between it and the Council on Greek Life, supported renovation of Hunt Hall and opposed reduction in sorority size. While recognizing the faculty might have a different perspective, the CCA hoped the findings in the Greek Life Report will be of use.

Prof. Ben Marsh then presented his motion, which was seconded: *a) The Faculty chooses not to endorse "Bucknell's Plan For Prominence In Greek Life." It is inconsistent with previous Faculty action. b) The Faculty believes that the changes to that Plan suggested by the Committee on Complementary Activities are improvements. c) The Faculty requests that significant attention be given to the health of the entire student social system during the upcoming university strategic plan, and that considerable additional staff, programs, facilities, and resources be considered to support the interests of "independent" students.*

In his rationale, Prof. Marsh noted that part a) was procedural in the sense that the faculty must choose not to endorse reports (the default is acceptance). Part b) acknowledges the efforts of the Task Force. Part c) is more substantive. Prof. Marsh opposes the Greek system because of negatives attitudes and practices such as sexism and hazing, although he noted that these are not necessarily specific to fraternities and sororities. His motion is designed to be supportive of good and constructive aspects of student life.

In the ensuing discussion, Prof. Beth Capaldi raised the question of the time course of reforms to the Greek system, which Interim VP Student Affairs Charlie Pollack replied was indeterminate. Dean Ferraro noted that Bucknell is already better than many other Greek systems, but the point is to make absolute improvements. Prof. Payne reminded the group that 15 years ago the faculty voted to eliminate Greeks, and although this motion was not accepted by the administration, it remains the stated faculty opinion. He also said that there is another task force in place on student life outside of the Greek system; according to Dean Ferraro, a report should be out by early summer.

Some revisions to the motion were suggested. Prof. Marsh agreed to a vote on the three parts of the motion separately, and agreed to strike the sentence *It is inconsistent with previous Faculty action* from part a).

A vote was then taken, and all three parts of the revised motion were passed.

New Business

Prof. Jean Peterson delivered a report from the Committee on Instruction on the classroom scheduling crisis (written version appended to these minutes). She noted that this is a complex issue, needing both short-term and long-term solutions. The overall problem is the overuse of 9-2 block, which leads both to classroom shortages and schedule conflicts. Shifting classes to less popular blocks requires changing both student and faculty "culture". Chairs and deans have the responsibility to set class schedules, but faculty need to cooperate; the COI report largely offers suggestions about effective cooperation.

Discussion of the report included comments by several faculty that students may not be effective learners at 8AM and that many classes do not/would not attract enrollees at that hour. Dean Robert Midkiff and Interim VP Academic Affairs Genie Gerdes responded that many students reported positive experiences with 8AM classes, and that the late afternoon slots were as underutilized. In response to an observation by Prof. Ben Vollmayr-Lee about the distribution of classes being more equal than he expected, Dean Midkiff reminded us that the final distribution is far more balanced than the initial requests for class blocks. He executes deanly muscle and persuasion to move classes to other blocks during schedule development.

Prof. Ned Ladd commented that some athletes have conflicts with mid to late afternoon classes because of needing to leave for practice by 3:30 PM, despite our stated policy of reserving athletics for 5-7 PM. If we are in a crisis, we may simply need more classrooms. Prof. Peterson reiterated the concern that course conflicts are not resolved by more classrooms. Prof. Marsh observed that the system needs to both support chairs and reward collegiality because it is difficult to ask professors to schedule classes in unpopular time blocks.

Prof. Peterson concluded by inviting further responses to the report to COI.

Prof. Michael Frey presented a committee report from CFAP (attached). He said that the across the board increase of 6% in faculty salaries leaves Bucknell in a similar salary position relative to other schools as we were last year.

Prof. Marty Ligare asked if CFAP can supply data on the distribution of scores in recent merit reviews. Prof. Frey agreed that those data would be informative and has requested them. Prof. Jeff Evans added that faculty used to see a salary distribution every year, which was also useful.

In the final agenda item, Prof. Shackelford introduced her motion, which was seconded: *The faculty encourages the University administration to review the campus weapons policy and to act swiftly and decisively in settling the current incident to insure the safety and well being of all members of the Bucknell Community.* Rationale: despite the recent change in administrative policy, the motion is meant to also address the speed of disposition of cases. Prof. Payne added that a positive vote would be an affirmation of action already taken. The motion passed.

Prof. Payne concluded this last meeting of the academic year by asking the assembly to thank all interim administrative staff. A round of applause followed, and Prof. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty

**Report on Classroom Scheduling
Committee on Instruction
April, 2001**

The Committee on Instruction has reviewed data presented by the Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and the Registrar's Office. The Committee has determined that there is a classroom scheduling problem in the University, at least in part because some instructional time periods are under-utilized, while other time periods are more popular with students and Faculty. We recognize that the interrelated issues are complex. We have been adding 4-5 new faculty positions each year, we teach more small classes, and more courses are offered than in previous years. More classrooms would ease the classroom shortage, but would not solve the problem that it is difficult for students to construct a schedule if too many courses are offered at the same time. And adding classrooms would be a long-term solution in any case, whereas the scheduling difficulty is immediate. In addition, Faculty are expected to be scholars as well as teachers, and naturally prefer teaching schedules that facilitate their scholarship. Timing of classes is just one relevant trade-off, along with other factors such as content of courses, number of preparations, and size of classes. Chairs must consider all of these factors in attempting to arrive at equitable teaching schedules across their departments or programs. Acknowledging that many other factors are relevant, COI still believes it is necessary to urge the Faculty to work to shift some classes from overpopulated times into less populated times.

For at least 3 years, Department Chairs and some faculty members have been aware of the increasing difficulty of accommodating faculty preferences for teaching during certain time slots. Tuesday/Thursday between 9:30 & 2:30, and MWF between 9:00 and 2:00 represent the most considerable concentration; see Figures 1 & 2, (Time Utilization Patterns, from COI report of April 28, 2000, "An Overview of Classroom Needs." The extremely uneven distribution of classes and the under-utilization of classrooms at certain times have created an unworkable situation for those responsible for scheduling teaching spaces. For example, some 60 courses did not have classrooms when the current semester (Spring 2001) began; however, many classrooms went unused during off-peak-hours. The shortage could be largely alleviated if faculty members spread their teaching schedules more evenly throughout the week.

By offering more early morning and late afternoon courses, faculty would ease some of the demand for classrooms during the 9:00-2:30 crunch. A more even pattern of classroom use would ease other registration, administrative and academic problems as well, including the difficulty students have constructing their class schedules when so many of the courses they need to complete their degrees and programs meet during the same cluster of hours.

As stated in the Faculty Handbook, the construction of the academic schedule has been the responsibility of Department Chairs and the Deans of the Colleges (under Organization, pg. 2-3). Matching available classrooms to Faculty needs is only one of the complicated set of agendas they need to fulfill to make it possible for most students to complete their degree requirements in 4 years (e.g., staffing a proportionate selection of introductory, intermediate, and advanced courses, major requirements, required courses, labs, W courses, and Capstones).

The materials distributed to Department Chairs for schedule preparation contain guidelines clearly designed to prevent unequal time distribution, reminding Chairs “that **each department needs to have an even distribution of time,**” and to “Spread courses more evenly from Monday 8 a.m. to Friday 5 p.m., with wider use made of Friday afternoon hours, and avoiding excessive use of the MWF 9 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and the TR 9:30-11 a.m and 1-2:30 p.m” (Registrar’s “Guidelines for Preparing the Academic Schedule”). The same document advises Chairs to “**AVOID SCHEDULING A SECOND COURSE FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT IN ANY ONE TIME BLOCK UNTIL YOU HAVE USED EACH BLOCK ONCE**” (original emphasis). Adherence to these guidelines varies considerably across the University, with some Chairs and some departments establishing clear policies about course and schedule distribution, and others leaving the matter largely to faculty preference.

The COI hopes that the present scheduling problems might be solved, or at least significantly eased, if more faculty members were aware of the extent of the present crisis. We encourage our colleagues to be more attentive to the University’s overall curricular needs, to be more flexible and varied in their teaching hours, and to consider the following suggestions:

Department Chairs and Faculty should take into account the prescribed process when negotiating schedules for the academic year.

Department Chairs should encourage Faculty to teach in underutilized time slots by asking department members to share this undertaking in a collegial and equitable manner.

Departments should consider offering “high demand” courses in under-utilized time slots and faculty members should share the teaching of these courses in a collegial and equitable manner.

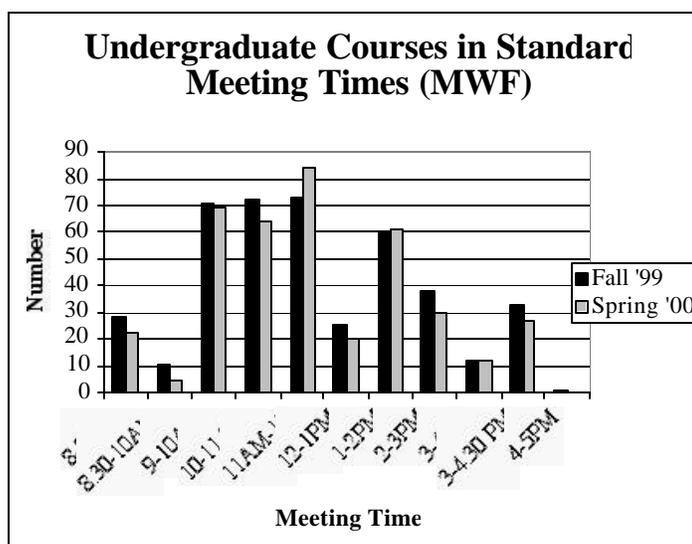
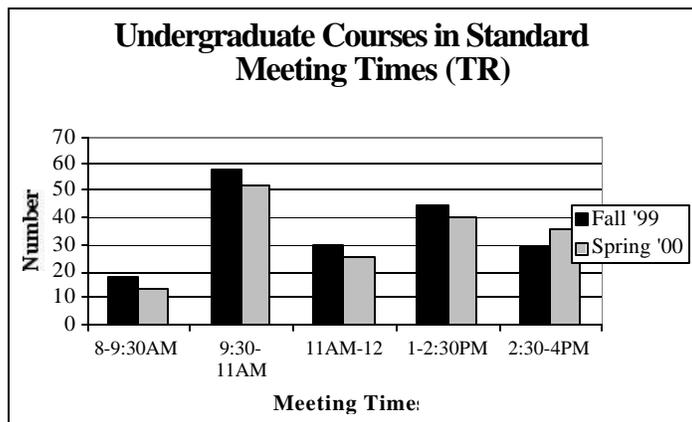
Faculty members who teach courses that draw large number of students, either as requirements or electives, should consider offering these courses in under-utilized time slots.

Faculty should not expect, as a matter of course, to always receive their first choice of time slots. There should be a willingness within departments to share equitably the distribution of early morning or late afternoon courses.

These suggestions ask the Faculty to honor a spirit of collegiality and co-operation. In the last 3 years, as the extent of the scheduling problem has steadily worsened, extremely difficult situations have arisen when faculty members, or Department Chairs, or both, have refused to respond to requests by the Registrar and the Deans to alter schedules because of a lack of available classrooms at over-populated times. Administrators and Department Chairs are understandably reluctant to “force” schedules upon recalcitrant faculty members. We are hopeful that a greater consciousness of the extent of the present scheduling difficulties will encourage greater co-operation.

At the same time, the COI recognizes that this issue intersects with others of great concern to the Faculty, including the possible impact of teaching schedules on Faculty scholarship and student course evaluations. The COI expects that the impending discussion of Faculty course load will treat the availability and use of classroom resources, expectations for Faculty, and the merit system (which currently offers no explicit recognition for “collegiality” or “helping my department meet its curricular needs”). Recognizing that this report suggests a short-term solution to a long-term and complex problem, the COI will make these matters part of our agenda in our participation in that important discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Peterson



Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee Report April, 2001

The Board of Trustees has approved an overall salary increase of 6.00% for continuing faculty for 2001-02. Based on the guidelines adopted for the faculty merit review system, the parameters of the system for the 2001-02 academic year are:

- 1) The across-the-board salary increase for untenured faculty is 6%.
- 2) The across-the-board salary increase for tenured faculty is 1.47%—half of the projected inflation rate of 2.94%.
- 3) For tenured faculty who have been reviewed under the current merit review system, the assigned merit score determines the merit portion of the salary increase. The value of the base merit point is determined by the full

set of merit scores assigned for this year. Recall that this value is determined by adjusting the value of the base merit point up to the level where all available merit funds are exhausted, and that the outcome depends on the specific distribution of merit scores over which merit funds are distributed. The value for the base point this year is \$524. A discount rate of 5% is used to determine the values of points 2-10.

- 4) The transition from our old system of review based on three merit categories (I, II, III) to our new system based on merit scores is now almost complete. Only a few tenured faculty have not yet been evaluated under the new system. For this small group, merit categories will be converted as follows:

II = average of bottom 73% of merit scores including all 3 years of experience

III = average of top 27% of merit scores including all 3 years of experience

- 5) As is customary, a small portion of the increase pool was reserved for market and equity adjustments.

- 6) The promotion increment is \$1000.

Respectfully,

Michael Frey
FAPC Chair